

Plural memory and fidelity to inheritance
Considerations on the intervention of Victor Mestre and Sofia Aleixo in the
hundred year-old building of the Lyceu Passos Manuel

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Introdução

Liceus were founded in Portugal in 1836 in a process where Passos Manuel, their creator, used France, where he had been educated thirty four years earlier, as a reference. But this modernizing drive by Portugal's Liberals was expressed almost only in the Letter of the Law. In fact, the initial stage, which extended almost to the end of the century, of these education establishments was marked by instability, mistakes and acute understaffing. There are many accounts of direct observers who spoke of "chaos" and "anarchy" to describe this subsystem of education in the decades after its creation. The situation would only change when, in 1894, and at the hands of Jaime Moniz, the Government of João Franco established the bases of the modernization of secondary education, helping, principally between the decades of 1910 and 1940, to consolidate a process of differentiation based on a new class of age, other than that of childhood. Now, architecture would play a very essential role in consolidating this operation. We know that all education programs of modern times used serial space, or rather, they were based on the principle that the determination of individual places would make both the control of each subject, taken as an autonomous unit, and the orchestration of the simultaneous work of all, possible. It should be pointed out straight away that this pedagogical framework model, then called day boarding schools that postulated the physical distancing of the pupil from the social world inside a building with specific characteristics, would never leave us. This is a form of power, made natural over one hundred years, which shapes the reality of a specific population and which one imagines as being capable of simultaneously penetrating and shaping the mind, body and soul of each student. In Portugal, the machine of teaching, watching, assessing and stratifying adolescent knowledge and behavior began with the inauguration of the Lyceu Passos Manuel building in 1911. And it still governs us completely.

1. The State educator

The Last century saw the State gradually replace families and the Church in the education of children and young people. In secondary school, adolescent identities became increasingly important thanks to a curricular device, the essential components of which are still quite visible today (Nóvoa, Barroso & Ó, 2003). In fact, this institution brought back a Long-Lost stable school grammar, which, in a wide range of aspects, seemed impermeable, in its organizational approach, to attempts to reform it throughout the nineteen hundreds. As stated by Tyack & Tobin (1994), the school institution has resisted change to its more elementary structures. So, let

us consider its variables, established since the Reform of Jaime Moniz, where: (i) the secondary education population remains isolated in a purpose-built building, separated from the city by walls and controlled gates; (ii) the pupils are grouped in stratified classes with a quite homogeneous and compact composition both with regard to knowledge and with regard to behavior; (iii) the pedagogical discourse is centered on the optimization of Learning tasks, while at the same time stressing the need for an individualized and active education, or rather, that takes into account the different intellectual, physical or emotional aptitudes of each pupil and where the acquisition of knowledge, in the various study subjects, takes place through the direct observation and experimentation of phenomena and realities; (iv) the pupils Live in a regime of a day boarding school and the curriculum contemplates blocks related with mental and physical activity, reiterating examples of positive morals; (v) school times were very rigid in the way in which they distribute and stratify the various areas of knowledge, taking into account different indices of intellectual fatigue; (vi) incessant appeals are made for extracurricular activities and participation in cultural collectives, in which the administration should tangentially be performed by the pupils themselves; lastly (vii), in terms of discipline, corporal punishment and repression are absolutely condemned in favour of disciplinary regulations and practices that prefer self-regulation.

It is essentially from this old disciplinary-normalising Logic that *illuminist* belief sprang - and how this still affects us today!, according to which the school is responsible for finding and exploring the intellectual, physical and moral potential and capacities of each pupil which will turn him/her into a creative actor, satisfied and realized both professionally and emotionally. In fact, any pedagogical discourse that, in any segment of our recent history, has assumed a critical position in relation to the situation of secondary education and insisted on the urgency of modernising reforms, provides us once again with the certainty that pupils can no Longer be treated as subjects whose education continues to unfold, solely, on the seats and in the compendiums used in the classroom, receiving and assimilating, year after year, the content of school courses, until they obtain a diploma, merely certifying the possession and the exact value of intellectual knowledge; in other words, what the critics of the school traditional have defended is the production of a given type of being. All renewal discourses, in fact, argue in favour of the subordination of the principle of instruction to the principle of the complete education of the pupilo This is an affirmation that could have been made today, yesterday or 100 years ago: governments have tried to transfer to the spaces where school socialization takes place the essential features of the tasks geared towards implementing the modern categories of person and citizen under the ideals of humanism, lights, progress and autonomy. The history of secondary education essentially allows us to see how an authentic technology of accountability was set up, in which the State is able to secularize the infant-juvenile soul, universalising mechanisms of self-control, self-motivation and the internalization of the authority that are still felt today.

As a historian, I am fundamentally interested in understanding this transition, in the secondary education institution, between the singular and the plural, the individual and the collective, the

works of permanent adaptation of the pupil to the class inside a capsule that is imagined and constructed outside of the rhythm of social Life, but where this would soon be recreated in an orderly and systematic fashion (Ó, 2003 and 2009). Secondary education, begun with Liberalism and consolidated at the turn of the 19th century to the 20th, offers us the foreseeable promise of a governable and governed world. Now, it should be stressed that the socio-political project that attributes the monopoly of educational movement to the State, transforming cultural free will into natural evidence, would only be in a position to become effective if it were served by a new spatial organization, where only buildings totally planned and designed from the ground up could possibly provide an answer.

2. Scenarios of school dissolution in the 19th century

The pedagogical renewal ideology of the second half of the 19th century was only in a position to succeed when it managed to clearly convince the authorities of the need to create the material conditions for the pupil to be definitively torn from his/her current supervision, to then be educated with in a more "purified" manner and without the "harmful" influences of society. It was perhaps at this point that it managed to identify and clearly set out the sources of social immorality - with highly impressive images -, that educational thought began to absorb the hygienist reasoning of the second half of the 19th century. There were very many signs that allowed it to be claimed that, for the pupil's good, s/he should be taken from his/her traditional educators:

"The slackness of fathers and of mothers, or the justified impossibility of obliging them to study; the smallness of houses, which did not allow them to be isolated from the family, and remove them from domestic distractions: the harshness of the study (...); the precocious depravation, which is more sinister and scary than the underground swamp on which Lisbon sits, as some hygienists say, premature depravation, that does more for the moral and physical downfall of our society than the influence of the noxious emanations of drainpipes on the health of the body; and the extremely natural expansibility of the first years, which makes children become distracted so easily, and are not able, without great effort, to muster their attention and apply it to things that do not delight their senses" (Teles, 1875: 35-36).

In this period many other illustrious academics and pedagogues rallied around the words of Sousa Teles, who I have just quoted, denouncing the poor physical and moral conditions in which classes were taught, both in colleges and in public Lyceus. Then began a Long conversation concerning the need to create a structure that would help to *govern* all the contexts in which education took place, emphasising the respective pacifying advantages that such an option entailed. The question of boarding schools and the inherent reclusion of Jesuit colleges, interrupted by Pombal in the middle of the 18th century, began to loom once again with the backdrop of the creation of a new disciplinary regime for pupils. It should be emphasised here that the principle and ultimate purpose towards which the various considerations around the buildings and of Lyceus installations were heading had much more to do with the moralization and domestication of adolescent Life than the good transmission of scientific knowledge.

The best circumstantiated account that we have on these aspects was written by the Viscount of Benalcanfor, who became inspector of secondary instruction from the 1881-1882 school year on, having also been a Member of Parliament and Peer of the Realm. In his *Apontamentos* (Notes), published straight away, he told of his visits to inspect around ten Lyceus on Mainland Portugal and the Islands. His first major conclusion was that there was "a complete antagonism between the building and the purpose for which it was intended" (1882: 10). He was doubtless referring to the fact that, during the process of the so-called physical "installation stage", between 1836 and 1860, secondary schools occupied various public buildings that were empty at the time, mainly former seminaries and convents, that, as we know, were abolished after the triumph of the liberals. Up to the year when he made his inspection only the Lyceu of Aveiro functioned in a building that was purpose built. All the others did not even have the most basic requisites - of space, hygiene, didactic material - for educational activities of any kind to take place therein (Proença, 1997: 119-129).

Merging knowing and being would be the great battle of the future. The focus of critics of the Lyceu fell directly on these regions, without even acknowledging the existence of problems worthy of note in the teacher-pupil relationship. And precisely the most impressive description that the Viscount of Benalcanfor made, concerning the discipline of Portuguese schools, was about the Lyceu National Central of Lisbon the future Lyceu Passos Manuel, then based in a building rented by the State in the Largo do Poço Novo, in 1859, and where it operated up to 1884. This visit was, in fact, the one that made the worst impression on him, but for reasons only connected to the building and to the living conditions that it provided, exempting the pupils of all blame. As if, in fact, they could not be held accountable for the manifest lack of discipline. I describe this as a *hygienic reason* and which then seemed to discover a zone - as vital as it was abandoned by the powers of the time - for a social intervention of standardisation. A number of other voices joined Benalcanfor's, as if to demonstrate the possibility of a new consensus over hygiene. After the reproduction of the inspector's discourse, I will place other texts going in the same direction, one by Ramalho Ortigão (1836-1915), of the same time and also referring to the Lyceu National Central of Lisbon, and also a third - but this corresponding to a memory of a pupil's experience - signed by Agostinho de Campos (1870-1944). They all make it clear that the issue of discipline, when taken and dealt with only as a mere case of policing - the management of deviant behavior by the use of the usual penalties and direct vigilance, symbolic dissuasion with the presence of a representative of authority and punishments for given infractions -, was too narrow and that it did not address the greater majority of the problems. And this was the case most of all because it did not take material factors into account, allowing - and even seeming to invite - the unfettered unruly and disobedient impulses of most youngsters. Here we have another description of misgovernment:

After referring to the poor physical conditions of the Lyceu National Central of Lisbon, both in terms of the building and didactic material, the Viscount of Benalcanfor touched on the issues of the so-called "internal policing" which he discussed at length: "The entire truth is that the main source and causes of most of the unruliness imputed to the

Lack of policing, the shouting and screaming of the pupils in the patios and in the corridors of the Lyceu, the abuse of tobacco smoke inside the building and its nauseous effects, are due none other than to the awful building in which that institute functions. Such a building, singularly inapt for the purposes for which it is intended, holds within itself the detrimental conditions that render useless the best planned measures, both from a pedagogical and disciplinary point of view. We can and should certainly improve, where possible, the means of policing the current building at all times, while there is no other better building which could truly be called a Lyceu; but it is the duty of sincerity to recognize that the proportions and Layout of the Lyceu building are - as a rule - the obstacle to ridding ourselves of the abusive practices that abound there, and which should be demolished in the name of decorum and official secondary education and of the highest moral and intellectual interests of our youth, to whom education is administered under the direction of the public powers" (Benalcanfor, 1882: 11-12)

Ramalho Ortigão's description entirely corroborated what the inspector was doing at that time: "the walls, blackened, are covered in slogans and obscene drawings. Order is maintained by two guards who act simultaneously as playground monitors and man-servants. Some soldiers from the municipal guard provide back-up for the policing. The pupils, Left to their own devices, smoke cigarettes in the corridors or in the toilets, the appearance of which I feel I cannot describe for you [the minister of the Realm] except that they seem to be turned inside out. The senior management of the establishment, intelligent and keen, do not have the means to remedy this state" (Ortigão, 1943 [1881]: 146).

Agostinho de Campos painted a full picture of the physical and material conditions of his Lyceu, and which he will have certainly attended in the eighteen eighties: "Imagine a huge house that had once been a palace, but which, in the dark, merely Looked Like a shadow of times gone by; or a badly kept, filthy and putrid stable. The ceilings had almost all fallen to the floor; the dust and mud of countless school years were trodden into the black ground; on the extremely dirty walls there were phrases and drawings similar to those that street kids are now embarrassed to write on the walls; in the classrooms you did not see desks where the pupils could write, but simple plank benches as sordid and old as the floor and walls; the teacher's table was an almost indescribable piece of furniture, from which hung greenish strands of a cloth that had once been its Lining; there was no gymnasium, covered or uncovered playground, but a simple small inner yard, wet and dark Like a well between the walls of three stories, full of old papers, sticks of furniture and other waste, now without colour or shape; and all of this misery opened onto a road full of taverns and other establishments of vice, still more dangerous and infected. This was the scenario of education in the days when we, those of my age, were still boys." (Campos 1922 [1911]: 211-212).

Accompanying the critics I mentioned was the idea that the new regime would have to find the means necessary for work to begin on the conduct of the pupil and that this intervention, bearer of a modern vision both of educational problems and of the resolution of the conflicts which had

characterized the secondary school of the 19th century, would only be in a real position to take effect when a complete reformulation of the spaces in which education was administered had taken place. Everything had to be done to dispense with the use of force or at least reduce it to the minimum. ALL were firmly convinced that before violence broke out it could begin to be domesticated through the architectonic layout of the proportions, order, divisions, paths and regimes of supervision that it consubstantiated. The solutions that pedagogues, doctors and other specialists anticipated from this social prophylaxis were preferentially of a preventive and indirect nature, situated both upstream and downstream of the transmission of the content of school knowledge. The new model of the Lyceu would have to have all the conditions for pupils to remain there, physically and intellectually fully active after the end of academic activities. It was believed that the pupil would thus be sheltered from the negative influences of the family and the deviant temptations of society. Through a new administration of space and time the emerging hygienic reason promised to effectively socialise younger generations. Regardless of whosoever the defenders of Lyceu renewal may have been, in the eighteen eighties everyone was counting on the promises of ideal perfection, obtained from new principles of construction of a building that one would look on as a *field of inspection*.

And it was the precise notion of the complex problem that involved the building in itself and its social use, that obliged the Viscount of Benalcanfor to argue that the authorities should concern themselves with taking extreme care over the construction of schools. According to him, in this particular aspect, this was a problem that was so "exclusive" to *pedagogical* reason that in no circumstances could it be left to the "free will of architects". The inherently disciplinary needs would determine *avant la lettre* a vocabulary that would make architecture, from the inside out, develop a rationalist design that was only tied to educational objectives. It was not a problem of artistic conception of the façades that was essentially at stake, but, on the contrary, the raising of a material device inside of which one could develop the complete governance of the school population in a functional manner. The inspector, in this perspective, advised the Executive to develop "a general and uniform system of construction" that followed the dual hierarchy of the Lyceu of the day - central and national - and which adapted "in its outer appearance and in its internal divisions, to the needs and to the decorum of secondary education". The idea that school buildings should be built taking into account a "common standard", respecting only "the purposes" for which they were intended, led him to also state that "nothing would be more absurd" than "the State relinquishing the plans in accordance with which Lyceus should be built". It was necessary that "the complex conditions and needs should be fully addressed" and obeyed, at the risk of wasting "important sums" to no avail (1882: 16 and 23). For him there was a causal nexus between space and people's behaviour. The question of discipline was almost fully explained by the conditions and characteristics of the building.

3. Options for the Lyceu Passos Manuel building (1881-1911)

It should be pointed out that it was about the construction process of the future Lyceu Passos Manuel building that this discussion materialized in Portugal. The discussion of the design and of the building program helps us to effectively understand how the ethical -sanitary concerns expressed above were interweaving, solidifying and taking root. We are now at the starting point. although exactly thirty years more would pass until the new installations were opened. On the 15th of July 1881, the government, then totally "certain of the impossibility of finding an existing building that would satisfy the conditions of hygiene and pedagogy necessary for the installation of those services", and also recognized the "absolute convenience of having a proper building built for the Lyceu National Central of the city of Lisbon", appointed a Committee of three members to choose the site, with the choice falling in the area around the Convent of Jesus for reasons that were "natural, sufficient and salubrious". Then followed a succession of designers: in 1882 the architect José Luís Monteiro presented a first design that would be replaced by another six years Later, drawn up by Rafael da Silva e Castro and, following Jaime Moniz' Reform, in the year 1896, Rosendo Carvalheira was entrusted with preparing another design, in spite of the fact that building work had already begun almost a decade earlier. In 1902 a new committee² would be appointed by the Minister of the Realm, this time to "organise the definitive design with all possible urgency", making use of the works that were "already begun" in the meantime and proposing the "modifications" that he considered "necessary" (Revision of the Building Project for the Lisbon Lyceu, in the area around the Convent of Jesus, 1903: 135-136).

This committee presented a number of conclusions and opinions, published in the *Boletim da Direcção Geral de Instrução Pública* (Bulletin of the Directorate-General of Public Education) and from this document one can see that the "pedagogical criterion", the "conquests of the pedagogical sciences" and, above all, the existence of an "organic program of secondary education" different to the previous one imposed major modifications in the building design then in the process of being built. One would say that it was the new demands of the regime of the day boarding school that determined the changes in the conception of the building. The Committee rejected what one might call a certain superficial nouveau riche-ism - "today the requirements for buildings of the intended nature and purpose are Less ostentatious, and the circumstances of the country call for more sobriety in our desires and more modesty in our aspirations" , in favour of a rational design dominated by the "harmonious simplicity of Lines" in an installation that was essentially "of a utilitarian character". As this was a case of remodeling a building that was already being built above ground level, the essential considerations had to do with sacrificing "the general and decorative Lines" in favour of a "Lighter and more cheerful Look". There should be around 40 classrooms to house the 1000 pupils expected and the whole interior of the building would have to receive "Lots of air and plenty of Light" as the students would have to be in there "for 6 to 7 hours each day". (Revision of the Building Project for the Lisbon Lyceu, in the area around the Convent of Jesus, 1903: 138-156). In any event, the essential concerns were about other areas. Could architecture help to group and segment the

school population? Could the solutions adopted improve the moral governance of the pupil through permanent occupation? It was the supposed positivity in these interrogations that the members of the Committee wanted to express in detail. Some of their ideas read like a practical illustration of a structural change in the public school - that which seems always favorable to the expansion of the panoptic regime, or rather, of the permanent and obligatory visibility of children and young people. And of how the control over their body and intimacy moved to the centre of the concerns of discourse and of the architectural artefact.

We read in the Steering Committee's opinion of the Design of the Lyceu Central: "based on what has been done already, and bearing in mind the needs arising from current secondary education, this Committee recognises the need to address the following fundamental considerations that it considers to be basic for the future remodeling project. The Long and necessary permanence of the pupils inside the Lyceu begs that this period be made easy, comfortable, hygienic and moral, and therefore one should make this extra activity useful, so that the intervals between classes may be filled with games and gymnastic exercises that not only occupy their spare time, but gradually contribute towards their physical development.

For the same reason concerning the Length of time spent therein, it is necessary to provide the pupils with an easy and comfortable way for them to eat their meals or Lunches in good conditions of hygiene and supervision, it therefore being necessary to provide them with a place within the area of the Lyceu that is appropriate for this purpose.

The gatekeeper or gatekeepers, guards and perchance other minor staff, should have a permanent residence in the building, where possible (...)"

We also read in the opinion of Roberto Pinto: "*latrines*. This is a matter that requires particular attention. It is not necessary to claim all the improvements that have expanded sanitary engineering for these areas of the building. I would only say in general, and above all, that I want the Latrines intended for the pupils to be in a place that is clearly in view and not hidden as is usually the case; that, in the same order of ideas, I want only the enclosure that is strictly required for decorum, and never so much that the pupil can consider himself entirely out of sight of all people; that is not sacrificed in short to a morality with the appearance of respecting a false or exaggerated decorum. The more convenient situation for these Latrines, when other considerations do not oppose this, is in the playgrounds; as it is during recreation that pupils should normally use them. For each playground corresponding to the different ages, there will also be a separate toilet" (Revision of the Building Project for the Lisbon Lyceu, in the area around the Convent of Jesus, 1903: 140 and 153).

In the *Information Memorandum of the Design of the Building of the Central Secondary School of Lisbon*, dated the 15th of October 1907, Rosendo Carneiro explicitly assumes his agreement with "the precious and erudite indications" published in the *Boletim da Direcção Geral de Instrução Pública* and undertook to respect them in the definitive design. And today we have before us an education establishment which might be understood - whether from its façade which has a scale, the monumentality of which one does not find often in schools of secondary education, or from the solemnity of the atrium or of the cloisters - as a result of the affirmation

of the power of the liberal State in its dedication to cultivate the future Leading elites or, otherwise, and as is my case, to see in it the expression of a consensus that, as of this period, would be applied, indifferently, through architecture, whenever one wanted to keep a certain number of people under inspection: the same spatial Logic served to punish the "incorrigible", enclose the "insane", reform "addicts", confine "suspects", employ the "unoccupied", cure the "sick" or educate "pupils". Whoever imagines that Lyceu buildings were built with the greater purpose of scientific Learning or civic indoctrination has read or knows little or nothing about the discussion and of the type of convergence that was behind it all.

4. Victor Mestre and Sofia Aleixo: making a place for the place

I am very pleased with the recovery achieved by the architects Victor Mestre and Sofia Aleixo, with the nature of their gesture, so rare these days. I believe that the voluntary elision of the authorship of both, completely assuming the inheritance of the architect Rosendo Carneiro, cannot fail to be impressive, especially these days. I would say that all their complex and delicate work, even in the aspects that are directly related to the current requirements of the so-called "Secondary Education Modernization Program" - which calls "for the intensive use of new information and communication technologies" (Parque Escolar, 2009) -, did not contaminate their intent of making a place for the place. Placed deliberately in the position of happy heirs, as I see it, Victor Mestre and Sofia Aleixo did all they could to be worthy of their inheritance and, in this regard, it makes a vivid impression on me that the materials, the craftsmanship and the building solutions of the end of the eighteenth century can once again come forth and play a central role in the intervention that they both brought about.

For whoever, like me, dedicated part of the last years trying in vain to make the education authorities aware of the need to safeguard their diversified patrimony - architectonic, musicological, archival and bibliographic - and intensely researched the documents of the old Lyceu Passos Manuel, there is nothing more gratifying than seeing that the now century-old building has been completely made over but that it can also continue to be interpellator as it would have been when it was first opened. All documented sources, of whatever type, and which in some way refer to the historic characteristics of the building and its respective interpretation, can be compared with the building in loco. In itself, the building continues to display the possibility of dialogue with the diverse narratives of its time. In this sense, it is simultaneously *heterogeneous text and singular idiom*.

In their conscious refusal to place one's authorship over the other, Victor Mestre and Sofia Aleixo exercise a *poetry of reiteration* as a way of producing this existence. In this regard I would like to evoke Jacques Derrida when he also saw himself in the position of heir and stated that, above all, it was necessary "to know and to know how to reaffirm what has gone before us", recalling that "we receive rather than choose". "It is necessary", argued the author of *A Escritura e a Diferença* (Writing and Difference), "to do all we can to appropriate a past that deep down we know cannot be appropriated". And what did "to reaffirm" mean for the philosopher? "Not only accepting this inheritance, but to re-launch it in another way and keep it alive. Not to

choose it (as what characterises an inheritance is primarily that it is not chosen, but rather it forcibly chooses us), but to choose to keep it alive. Life, in the end, the being-in-Life, this is perhaps defined by this internal tension of the inheritance, by this reinterpretation of the giving of the gift, or even of affiliation. This reaffirmation, at once continuous and interrupted, at least looks like a choice, a selection, a decision. It's own like another's". In reliving an endless memory we are not longing for the past, it is by no means a cult of memory or nostalgia. Only the evidence that when one knows how to let go can one develop the most important exercise: that of reinterpretation, of critique and of dislocation. Then in this transformation, an event, an unforeseeable event, can in fact be set in motion. "Only a finite being inherits, and his finiteness obliges him to", concludes Derrida (2004:12-13). I would say that the accomplishment of Victor Mestre and Sofia Aleixo comes within this utterly fundamental attempt of creative work that consists in surpassing that which surpasses ourselves.

5. Education Authorities: petrification and disdain

However, this exercise is not enough to leave us in peace. I would even say that the possibility of our continuing to be called on by the accounts and school culture of our predecessors is, unfortunately, lower today than before Parque Escolar arrived at the old Lyceu Passos Manuel. The care applied in the intervention on the building did not prevent a movement in the opposite direction, and which in my view is entirely intolerable, from affecting other patrimony, with the exception of some furniture, which was also cared for with the diligent support of the architects. Almost everything else - one would say with the exception of some poor images of politicians from the 19th century or half a dozen museum pieces in the Library and in the Laboratories - was either disposed of or suffered the most shameful lack of care. There is evidently no strategy to pedagogically safeguard and enhance this estate.

Whoever goes to the old Lyceu today and enters within its gates, will, like me, certainly be satisfied to see that the youngsters there today have access to much better installations for their classes, meals and physical activities than the pupils and teachers who went before them; but what "good practice", as people now like to talk about, can uphold the fact that almost all other traits of the past have been deliberately removed from the whole of the educational community? One could ask whether only the stones and furniture would retain the memory? Now, one should remember once and for all that finiteness is a characteristic of ourselves and not of inheritance. A golden opportunity was wasted, seeing that financial resources never seen before in Portugal were used in this and in other actions. Work should be done with the school community, the scientific community, with the technical assistance of specialists in documental sciences and musicology, on an Educational Project the centrality of which would include the pedagogical reactivation of the artefacts used by previous generations. From the 1880's to the present day men of culture such as Adolfo Coelho, Adolfo Lima or António Nóvoa, to only mention the better known ones, have fought and still fight, without a hint of success, for the organization of spaces that would bring the memory of education to life. What we know about the nature and extent of our school heritage is due much more to them than to the initiative of

ministers or educational Leaders. The rule of the Latter has been one of "what is out of sight is not worth caring for and can take care of itself" (Nóvoa, Carvalho, FaLé, Vieira, Ó, Ochôa & Caspard, 1997). Lyceu Passos Manuel has a musicological, bibliographic and archival patrimony almost without parallel in Europe, that has now been reduced to an ornament, piled up in basements, or was moved to the Science Museum with the promise of returning one day, no one knows where to or why. Perhaps, due to inertia, it will not return. If, using common pedagogical terminology, Parque Escolar justifies this decision with the need to adapt the spaces from the old Lyceu to the "new educational and environmental paradigms", then it should be informed that what it has claimed as its own pedagogical solutions were Long ago commonplace in scientific texts and even in the Letter of the Law. This company and the Ministry of Education, without having the slightest notion of what it is doing, emphatically reproduces a body of general evidence from so-called "active education". (Parque Escolar, 2009: 11-13). I simply must manifest my indignation with the fact that the Largest and most valuable collection of documents existing in a school public in Portugal, comprising manuscripts and bibliographic series from different institutions - some of the former dating from the second half of the 18th century while some of the Latter date from much earlier, is, at the time of writing, after the conclusion of the works on the building and its pompous inauguration, chaotically stored on inappropriate shelving and in installations without any kind of temperature and humidity controlo Even more serious is that this should occur Less than a decade after the whole documental collection was catalogued in exemplary fashion by the best archivists in the country under a project paid for out of public money. With regard to our archival heritage, we are worse off today than before the intervention. The commission did not contemplate the basic technical requirements necessary for the preservation and conservation of this documental heritage. I am referring specifically to the stability of the relative humidity (50%) and temperature (18°C) in the areas where the documents are kept, as well as the controlled ventilation of these areas. Besides this, the shelving used did not take into account the different formats of the documentation, which in itself demonstrates poor planning and a Lack of articulation between the Ministry of Education and Parque Escolar. A concrete example of this is the fact that the move of the documentation from their original shelves and drawers to the new shelving was not duly controlled, something which jeopardises the whole system of organisation of the archive which resulted from an archival organization project financed in 1996 by the Science and Technology Fund and by the Ministry of Education's own bureau and which was coordinated by António Nóvoa and João Vieira.

All of this, I insist, takes place inside a building that was received and treated with the greatest care. Forgive me Victor Mestre and Sofia Aleixo for this last aside. *Savoir laisser* is for us three, I am convinced, a condition of life that is and that we wish that it could be.

Lisbon, October-November, 2010

1 His real name was Ricardo Augusto Pereira Guimarães (1830-1889). He was given his title of nobility during the ministry of Saldanha.

2 Made up from the then Director-General of Public Education, Abel de Andrade, by the inspector of public buildings João Veríssimo Mendes Guerreiro, the Director of Public Works of the District of Lisbon Alberto Afonso da Silva Monteiro, the teacher of the Lyceu Nacional Central of Lisbon Roberto Correia Pinto and the architect Rosendo Carvalheira.